Failure of Communication Systems at Central Control Room at Delhi Airport

1570. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that all communication systems at the Central control room at Delhi Airport were down when hijacker was holding ransom 48 passengers and Crew Members at the Amausi Airport hijacking IA plane IC 810 on the 22nd January, 1993;

(b) whether Director General of Civil Aviation and his Deputy had a horrowing time in trying to contact Lucknow Airport to get hijacking details but neither the telephones installed at the control room, nor the hot line to be operational round the clock were working; and

(c) whether hijack drama at Lucknow has exposed a chink in the armour of Civil Aviation authorities at Delhi Airport ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Out of three telephones with STD facility at the central control room, one was working while the remaining two did not work satisfactorily. With the help of the local telephone authorities the defects in the two telephones were rectified and the connections were restored. Difficulty was, no doubt faced initially at the control room on this account. However, the communication facilities at the Air Traffic Control of Delhi Airport including high frequency communication were functional and contact with Lucknow Airpor was maintained.

Proposals for Improving the Functioning of Air India

1571. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether any concrete proposals have been worked out for improving the functioning of Air India;

(b) if so, what are the details thereon;

(c) whether any budgetary provisions have been earmarked for this proposal; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (d) Yes Sir. Details of the steps taken and proposed by Air India are indicated below :

(i) Specific strategies have been developed aimed at improving load factor in the first and executive class by making a special product offer, improving on-time performance and having better/improved service on board the flights.

(ii) Air India is inducting four Boeing 747-400 aircraft to replace old aircraft and to meet its expansion requirements at a project cost of Rs. 2333.33 crores.

(iii) Under its fleet renewal plan, Air India is aiming at having younger fleet to enhance passenger appeal and punctuality.

(iv) A new computer reservations system costing about Rs. 15.00 crores has been introduced effective May, 1992 to offer better services to passengers.

(v) Air India has introduced several city-pairs making it easier for passengers to plan their itinerary.

(vi) Personalised service through standardised response worldwide from the Air India system has been introduced for greater convenience of passengers.

(vii) A sales manual has been specially designed which contains travel related data for use at all Air India stations to assist the front line managers to interact directly with the business travellers. This effort has cost about Rs. 40.00 lakhs.

(viii) Upgradation of lounges at New York, London, Bombay and Delhi is to be undertaken in a phased manner. A provisional expenditure of Rs. 10 crores has been approved for this purpose.

Post Office at Gita Colony, Delhi

1572. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of Post Offices running in private buildings in Delhi;